Ten Reasons
WHY I WOULD NOT JOIN A SECRET SOCIETY

Secret societies have grown so numerous that one receives about as many invitations to join a lodge as to join a church. There is scarcely an able-bodied man or woman, who has the money, who will not at some time be asked to become a member of some secret order. The prudent will always carefully consider before taking upon them the obligations of any society, but especially one the dealings of which are in secret, and carefully guarded from the rest of the world. This fact itself makes the lodge an object of suspicion and should cause any one to stop and think before stepping into it.

All that secret orders propose to make known concerning their character is what is seen from the outside. Supposing this to be all that is known, I here find sufficient ground for the refusal of any invitation I might receive.

I might base my refusal upon the fact that it is a very poor financial investment. Any old-line life insurance company will furnish you a list of bankrupt lodges, and the causes which produce bankruptcy. It is simply a matter of a few figures in arithmetic to show that it
is impossible for fraternal assessment insurance to pay all that it claims, according to the
manner in which these orders propose to do business they can be self-perpetuating only a
certain number of years, some more, some less, but the average would be about twenty years. No, I would never join a secret society in the
hope of procuring cheap insurance. It is a poor
investment.

But the principal reason I would not join a
secret society is that I am a Christian. I could
not consistently do it; neither do I need any-
thing the lodge offers me. These facts form the
basis of every reason I would give.

I Would Not Join a Secret Society Because
I Prize My Manhood.

I delight in the fact that I am a free man.
As a Christian I rejoice that Jesus Christ has
brought us out of bondage into "the glorious
liberty of the sons of God." This He did at
the price of His own blood on Calvary. Thank
you that I am going to walk deliberately into
the bondage of a worldly institution like the
lodge?

As an American I rejoice in civil and reli-
gious liberty and the right of free speech.
These blessings were bought at the price of
...
be looked after it was all over. Can any one who has any self-respect or manhood voluntarily surrender himself to be put through the indignities of the initiation and to be made the butt of all the fun and buffoonery of the lodge room? No; God created us to be men, not toys.

I Would Rather Obtain Honor Upon Merit.

Suppose a man buys a West Point diploma and then purchases the hat, plume, uniform, sword and insignia of a military officer of high rank, and then, attired and bedecked in them, marches down the street, expecting everybody to admire and honor him. Honor? would you have for him? What would there be in that to interest a real man? Yet in the lodge every degree is purchased and the clothes bought to suit it. It is simply a fee and degree, right up through the order. No fee, no degree. At the end you have a lot of high-sounding titles and the insignia, the meaning of which the outside world is not supposed to know; and what do they amount to? Are we not enlightened enough to know that clothes, tinsel, tape and feathers do not make the man?

"Honor to whom honor is due" is the scriptural injunction. When the aged remnant of those brave men who marched forth to stop Rebel bullets with their bodies, who saved the Union, who gave the black man his liberty, come marching down the streets with their faded coats and tattered flags, we all give them a cheer. They deserve it for the service rendered humanity. Let this be the basis of honor among men. Whatever of honor I may receive from my fellow man, I do not wish to purchase it from the lodge or a clothing establishment.

I Have No Desire to Be More Selfish Than I Am.

We are selfish enough. The hardest battle the Christian has to fight is against his selfishness. The lodge seems to be an institution founded for the purpose of fostering, cultivating and bringing to perfection this characteristic of human nature.

Suppose that in a family there are five strong, stalwart boys, all of age and doing for themselves. They go out to the barn some day and organize a lodge. They take their oaths, confer their titles, put on their lodge buttons and come back to the house.

The old, gray-haired father, stooped with age, inquires the meaning of the button on the lapel. "What, pa, that is our lodge button." "Lodge? what do you mean by lodge?" asks the father. "Pa, do you not know what a lodge is? Why, it is a fraternity, a brotherhood, we have established for mutual assistance and protection, and we have sworn to stick to each other through thick and thin." The old man says, "I cannot see the need of this brotherhood idea, as you have always been brothers;
but since you have done it, I suppose you will have no objections to your father joining the thing? I am getting old now and I need you boys for assistance and protection. You will take me in? "Oh, pa, that would never do; you are, our lodge will not admit men over a certain age—you are too old."

Then the old mother, who has been listening to it all, comes forward and says, "Boys, I need your assistance and protection. I do not know anything about the lodge, but I have assisted and protected you boys ever since you were born. Boys, you will take your mother into your lodge?" "No, mother, we could not do that; you are a woman."

Then the lame brother comes forward. "I, am lame, I am not able to get along in the world very well, I need your assistance and protection; you will take me in?" "No, we could not do that. You see, we cannot admit anyone that we are not certain can do for himself and at the same time help us. No, we cannot admit you; you are a cripple."

Could you conceive of anything more selfish than that? Yet such is the lodge in the family of man: it is a system of compulsory selfishness. The lodge dictum is this: Help those only who are able to help us, and compel then to take an oath that they will do it.

I Am Perfectly Satisfied with the Religion of Jesus Christ.

I have asked lodge men to "seek the Lord while He may be found, to call upon Him while He is near," to join the church and profess His name. I have been answered in this manner. 

"I am a lodge man. We have our Bible, altar, rituals and prayers. If I live up to the teachings of the lodge, I will be all right. The lodge is all I need; I make no promises that man counts his lodge life his religion.

And I read M'cdermott, he tells me that Masonry is a religion, I find that it is a religion, that teaches the Jew, the Mohammedan, the Buddhist, the follower of Confucius, and every mother in my land! and I know that this is not the religion of Christ. I read the scripture passages as used in the lodge, and I find the name of Christ carefully expunged; and I know that is not the Christian's Bible. I hear the lodge prayer offered at the funeral and I hear no mention of Christ's name, and I know that is not a Christian prayer. I stand beside an open grave and see and hear the ceremony that transfers a drunken sot "from the lodge below to the Grand Lodge above," and I know that it is not the Christian's heaven they are talking about.

No, as I read the pages of God's Word, as I review the history of the ages and see how the religion of Jesus Christ has vindicated itself through the centuries, as I note its achievements, the influence it has had upon men and nations to lift them out of darkness into light, the noble character of those who have lived under its influence, the benefits it has brought to mankind, I can only say, there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, and that the religion of Christ is the religion for me.

With each invitation I have received to join
a lodge, there comes before my eyes that scene on Mount Carmel, the priests of Baal on one side of the altar and Elijah on the other; and the voice of the prophet rings in my ear, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." I say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

I Cannot Be a Good Lodge Man and a Good Church Man.

I have never met a man who could; have you? It is a physical as well as a moral impossibility. The lodge and the church are diametrically opposed to each other in origin, purpose, aim, effort and destiny. Every one must make his choice; he cannot be an earnest supporter of both. The lodge and the church are calling for the same time, energies and money. Which shall have them?

To be a good lodge man I must support it financially. In every city or town I see temples, halls or lodge rooms which must be built or rented and furnished. Then there comes the endless amount of paraphernalia, parades, banquets, receptions and what not, added to the regular initiation fees, dues and assessments. Every cent I contribute to that must be withheld from the church, which is always in need of so much money to further the Gospel. I hear God saying, "Honor the Lord with thy substance," and there is no place for the lodge in that.

To be a good lodge man I must give my time and labor to the lodge. But to every Christian God says, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

To be a good lodge man I must give the lodge first place in all things. But I prefer to invest my money, energies, and time in the Church of Jesus Christ, the only divinely ordained channel of blessing to a lost world.

I Do Not Wish to Be 'Bound by Oath to Unbelievers.

We admit that there are some Christians in the lodges. But when the lodge binds together under oath, the Jew, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Confucianist and the devotee of practically any religion in the world, there is no doubt that the majority are unbelievers. Christ's direction to His people is, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." I propose to follow His word of command, for these reasons:

1. Because I do not wish to assume responsibility for the sins of the lodge. The guilt of the sins of an organization falls alike upon each member of that organization. They are thus held liable in earthly courts, and they will be in the court of heaven. As individuals we have enough sins of our own to answer for, without assuming the sins of an organization controlled by unbelievers. The very fact that all they do is done in secret should make us pause before becoming identified with them.

2. I do not wish to place myself where I will be compelled to aid and abet the lodge and its members in whatever they undertake to do. To this the oath would bind me, whether they do right or wrong.

3. I do not wish to be affiliated with them, as
I believe in the Brotherhood of Man as Christ Taught It.

The lodge teaches that all the initiated are brothers, and love special stress on the fraternal relationship that exists among lodge members. Christ, by his apostle Paul, taught that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men—that is, mankind is a universal brotherhood by a common blood relationship. Every man is his brother's keeper, and only those with the spirit of Christ are his friends."

In summarizing the rights of men, Christ gave the second great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This applies alike around the world, and includes those in the lodge and those out of it—every man, woman and child, regardless of station, country or station.

Christian Charity: Not Charity.

The lodge proposes to be a charitable institution. It offers help only toward those who practice. First, it is the word apply. Second, it is the word apply. Third, it is the word apply. Fourth, it is the word apply. Fifth, it is the word apply. Sixth, it is the word apply. Seventh, it is the word apply. Eighth, it is the word apply. Ninth, it is the word apply. Tenth, it is the word apply.

But charity is not charity. It stops at the charity of Christ. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity. It is not charity.

I prefer Christ's method of doing good. Every lodge man will say that the lodge men...
good. If he cannot say that, he ought to be out of it. Supposing that their purpose is to do good, as a Christian | object to their method. Jesus Christ went about continually doing good. He is our example in all things. Yet the lodge has just the opposite method from His. They do all their good under cover, in secret. Jesus Christ did all of His work in the open. He might have joined a secret society, if He had so desired. There were plenty of them in His day. The lodges claim antiquity, and yet grant it. They may be traced back to Osiris, Baal and Eleusis. The mysteries of the heathen worship in Egypt, Rome and Babylonia were simply the orgies of modern secretism with few changes.

Jesus Christ joined none of these. He was light and walked in the light. At the close of His life He said, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue and the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing." His command to all Christians is, "Follow me." It is certain He will never lead them into a lodge room. When He sent His disciples into the world to do good He said, "Go ye into all the world" (not into a lodge room), "to every creature" (not to a few lodge members), "Ye are the light of the world"; do not hide yourselves. "No man, when he lighteth a candle, putteth it in a secret place." Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "What I tell ye in darkness, that speak ye in light; what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." Go out into the open, give every man, everywhere, a square deal. Let men know what good you propose to do them and how you propose to do it. Again, He says, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, but his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

All My Wants Are Supplied in Christ and His Church. Some lodge member says, "The lodge will help you." "The Lord is my helper; vain is the help of man." "But the lodge will bring you honor." But Christ says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate; and I will receive you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "To him that overcometh" (just such temptation as lodgism), "will I give to eat of the tree of life;" he shall not be hurt of the second death;" I will give him, "to eat of the hidden manna, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he receiveth it;" he shall have, "power over the nations;" I will give him, "to clothe him in white raiment;" he shall be, "a pillar in the temple of
my God, and I will give him to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcome and am set down with my Father in his throne." All these honors from the One who has the right to bestow them. How empty lodge honors compared with these!

"God," says another, "you will get the benefits of the lodge society." The people of God are the best society I could wish. "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." I would a thousand times rather stand with the Psalmist in the twenty-sixth psalm than be a top-notch lodge man.

As for anything I need now, or may need, there is nothing for which I need the lodge. God's children can live in the twenty-third Psalm—"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." No, brother, their rock is not an our Rock.

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